

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SINGAP 00434 011031Z  
ACTION DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 ORM-02 SSO-00 IO-13  
/029 W

-----011037Z 004231 /11

O 010838Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7029  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 0434

STADIS////////////////////  
E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, VS, SN  
SUBJ: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES RESCUED BY MSC CHARTERED VESSEL  
ARABIAN SEA

REF: A. STATE 020967, B. SINGAPORE 421, C. GENEVA 0652

1. TWENTY-THREE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES RESCUED BY THE MSG CHARTERED VESSEL ARABIAN SEA LANDED IN SINGAPORE AT 17:30, JANUARY 31. THEY ARE CURRENTLY BEING HOUSED IN THE LOCAL YMCA UNDER THE CARE OF THE UNHCR. ALL REFUGEES HAVE EXPRESSED A WISH TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES.

2. DEPARTMENT AND UNHCR SHOULD NOT ASSUME FROM GOS ACTION IN ALLOWING REFUGEES TO COME ASHORE THAT GOS HAS ACCEPTED FIRST ASYLUM PRINCIPLE. THE ONLY REASON GOS PERMITTED THEM TO LAND WAS BECAUSE CONOFF WAS ABLE TO INFORM IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES AND MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS THAT REFUGEES WOULD BE PAROLED. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IN CASE LAST JUNE OF REFUGEES ABOARD A THAI FISHING BOAT IN SINGAPORE HARBOR, A ROVING INS OFFICER CONDITIONALLY APPROVED SIX FOR PAROLE AND GOS PERMITTED THEM TO DEPART (SINGAPORE 3162, JUNE 28, 1976). CERTIFICATE SIGNED BY INS OFFICER ON THAT OCCASION  
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PAGE 02 SINGAP 00434 011031Z

APPROVED REFUGEES FOR PAROLE "...PURSUANT TO THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT". THIS PHRASE WAS ADDED TO COVER THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT THE REFUGEES MIGHT LATER BE FOUND TO BE INELIGIBLE UNDER THE LAW OR MIGHT FAIL TO OBTAIN A FALCON CLEARANCE. NO REFERENCE WAS MADE IN THE STATEMENT THAT THE PAROLE WAS ONLY CONDITIONAL, THIS ASPECT BEING SUBSUMED IN REFERENCE TO PROVISIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT. AT THE

TIME GOS APPEARED TO ACCEPT INS OFFICER'S STATEMENT AS SATISFACTORY ASSURANCE OF ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES, AND FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS EMBASSY DID NOT CONSIDER IT POLITIC TO POINT OUT TO GOS THAT REFUGEES COULD STILL BE FOUND TO BE INELIGIBLE.

3. IN CASE OF 23 REFUGEES ON THE ARABIAN SEA, EMBASSY EMPLOYED SAME FORMULA USED BY INS IN THE PREVIOUS CASE. LETTER SIGNED BY CONOFF INFORMED DEPUTY COMPTROLLER OF IMMIGRATION THAT REFUGEES APPROVED FOR PAROLE "PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT". AGAIN IN VIEW OF HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS AND TO AVOID PROBABLE GOS REJECTION, EMBASSY DID NOT POINT OUT TO GOS THAT UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAW THERE WAS STILL A POSSIBILITY THAT THE REFUGEES COULD BE FOUND INELIGIBLE. HAD WE DONE SO WE ARE CONVINCED THAT GOS WOULD NOT HAVE LET THEM OFF THE SHIP. MOREOVER, IT IS LIKELY THAT IF WE HAD INDICATED PAROLE WOULD BE ONLY CONDITIONAL AND GOS HAD REACTED NEGATIVELY, IT WOULD HAVE DONE SO AGAIN IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES AND THUS PREJUDICE FUTURE REFUGEE LANDINGS. HOLDRIDGE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** SREF, VS, SN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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